

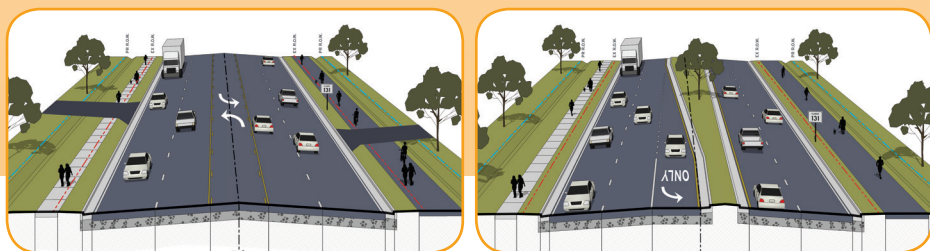
REFINED PROJECT Alternatives

The Refined Alternatives consider both raised curb and flush median designs.

The 13 ft. two-way left-turn-lane (TWLTL) flush median provides direct access to driveways of homes and businesses and side streets along IL 131. A flush median provides a high level of mobility but allows a greater number of conflict points.

The 22 ft. raised curb median provides access management for future development and is appropriate for areas with few existing driveways and other access points. See page 2 for additional discussion of raised curb medians.

Stakeholder input and engineering analysis will determine which median designs are appropriate for the preferred alternative.



(see inside for details)
Topics
Project Update
and Common Inquiry

IL 131
GREEN BAY ROAD PROJECT

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GET INVOLVED!

Check our website for project updates, sign-up for the mailing list or send comments. Visit www.IL131Project.com or contact: Ms. Lori Brown, Project Manager, Illinois Department of Transportation Division of Highways – District One, 201 W. Center Court, Schaumburg, IL 60196. Telephone: (847) 705-4477 Fax: (847) 705-4159.



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PURPOSE AND NEED

A major factor in the evaluation of the project alternatives for IL 131 is how the proposed solutions will address the PURPOSE of the project and the NEED for improvements. Through public involvement and technical analysis, the project Purpose was identified:

THE PURPOSE OF THE IL 131 ENGINEERING STUDY IS TO IMPROVE SAFETY AND FUNCTIONALITY ALONG IL 131 FROM RUSSELL ROAD TO SUNSET AVENUE. IMPROVEMENTS TO THIS ROUTE ARE NECESSARY TO ADDRESS ISSUES OF ROADWAY AND INTERSECTION CAPACITY AND EFFICIENCY; ENHANCE VEHICULAR, PEDESTRIAN, AND BICYCLE ACCOMMODATION AND SAFETY; AND BRING THE ROADWAY INTO COMPLIANCE WITH CURRENT IDOT STANDARDS.

The same data identified three key transportation Needs:

- IMPROVE SAFETY
- IMPROVE CAPACITY
- IMPROVE OPERATIONS AND MOBILITY

Working Together...Creating a Plan for Your Community

IL131 PROJECT NEWSLETTER

ILLINOIS ROUTE 131 GREEN BAY ROAD

PROJECT COORDINATION CONTINUES

Progress on the IL 131 Phase I study from Russell Road to Sunset Avenue slowed as coordination efforts increased with the Waukegan Airport on their proposed planning efforts. Discussions continue among numerous agencies to determine how the two projects will work together, in anticipation of wrapping up the IL 131 Phase I study.

There will be one more Corridor Planning Group / Technical Advisory Group meeting, with a Public Hearing to follow approximately four to six weeks later. Notification of the Public Hearing will be provided to the

general public as well as to the project stakeholder listing.

This Newsletter has been written to address comments that were made and submitted during and after Public Meetings 3 and 4. The Department has developed answers that address similar-themed questions from stakeholders. The input provided thus far on this study has been instrumental in the identification of solutions and the development of the project alternatives. We appreciate feedback, and look forward to any further discussion or comments that you may have as we complete the study.



PROJECT ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT MILESTONES

The preliminary alternatives were refined to two remaining alternatives. The refinement process took into account stakeholder input received at the four public meetings and four stakeholder workshops, the project Purpose and Need, technical analysis and design requirements.

The Refined Alternatives are undergoing evaluation to determine the Preferred Alternative.

Traffic volumes require that two through lanes be provided in both directions on IL 131 for all studied alternatives. The treatment of the median and roadway edge vary between alternatives and sections of the project area.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS COMMON INQUIRY TOPICS

THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (DEPARTMENT) RECEIVED SEVERAL COMMENTS FROM STAKEHOLDERS FROM PUBLIC MEETINGS, THE WEBSITE, AND MAILED LETTERS. RESPONSES TO THE PRIMARY AREAS OF CONCERN ARE NOTED BELOW:

Environmental Impacts

A Preferred Alternative will be developed based upon stakeholder input, constructability, and analysis of environmental/social impacts. Environmental and technical reports will be drafted to document the alternative and the impacts of the improvements.

The project must follow the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) which strives to enhance quality of the social and natural environment by avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating impacts. Several environmental and drainage concerns have been identified through stakeholder input and agency coordination, and were considered in the development of alternatives. Sensitive resources in the project area include city parks, county forest preserves and cemeteries. Measures to minimize impacts to these resources as well as address reported drainage problems were included in the Preliminary and Refined Alternatives, and will continue to be considered during the development of the Preferred Alternative.



Impacts to Private Property

This project will require the Department to acquire additional land to complete the potential improvements. The Department employs three types of land acquisition:

- Fee simple taking, or the acquisition of all rights and interest of real property;
- Permanent easement, or use of the property where underlying ownership is retained by the property owner, but access is provided for maintenance of facilities such as storm sewers and outfall ditches; and
- Temporary construction easement, where access is required only during construction for grading work, sidewalk or driveway construction, light pole relocation and other minor improvements.

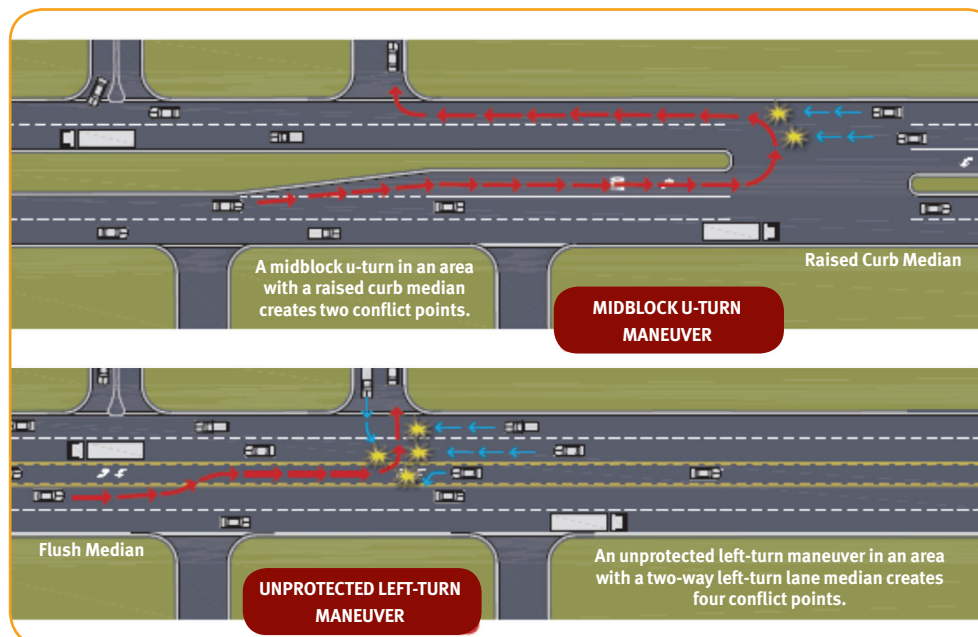
The Department's procedures to acquire property occur during design and plan preparation (Phase II) of the project process, and begin with a determination of ownership and preparation of a property description. An independent appraisal is then ordered with a review and report given to the Department. An offer to acquire the property at the appraised value is made. Compensation for the property acquisition is then negotiated between the property owner and the Department.

Raised Curb Medians & U-Turns

Stakeholders inquired about how the raised curb medians proposed by the Refined Alternatives in some areas on IL 131 would modify access to properties. IL 131 is an important north-south Strategic Regional Arterial (SRA) in Lake County. In accordance with Department requirements for SRA routes, median breaks are generally provided at quarter-mile spacing to accommodate u-turns and provide access to properties.

The "Safe Access is Good for Business" brochure published by the FHWA states that making a u-turn at a median opening to get to the opposite side of a busy road is about 25% safer than a direct left turn from a side street or other access point. Roadway configurations including a center two-way left turn lane create potential conflicts between through traffic and traffic turning left to access driveways. Visit the project website to review a copy of the FHWA brochure: <http://il131project.com/publications.html>.

Raised curb medians help manage access to properties along IL 131 so that turning and crossing movements occur at fewer locations. As you can see in the figure, a raised curb median on a four-lane arterial reduces the number of conflict points for a left-turning vehicle. Through stakeholder workshops and engineering analysis, the Refined Alternatives propose two-way left-turn lane and raised curb medians as appropriate to the characteristics of different areas of IL 131.



Safety/Crashes

Stakeholders raised concerns about safety on IL 131 in the project area. Analysis of crash data shows a record of safety issues over the past several years, including recent crashes that resulted in fatalities. Efforts to address safety concerns were significant factors in the development of the Preliminary Alternatives, the two Refined Alternatives, and ultimately the design of the Preferred Alternative.



Kenosha Road Intersection Realignment

Kenosha Road currently intersects IL 131 at an angle and along a curve which impairs visibility for vehicles approaching the intersection. Stakeholders have expressed concern about safety at the intersection.

Several alternatives for realignment of the Kenosha Road intersection were proposed to stakeholders and local agencies. The Preferred Alternative identified by the Lake County Division of Transportation and stakeholder input is a perpendicular intersection relocated approximately 1,000 feet north of 29th Street, creating a three-leg intersection. This option meets the project Purpose and Need since a perpendicular intersection is preferable to the current intersection configuration and will improve operations, capacity, and safety.

Bicyclist and Pedestrian Accommodations

In compliance with the Illinois "Complete Streets" legislation, the Department considers the needs of all users of a transportation corridor, including bicyclists and pedestrians. The Refined Alternatives include a 10-foot shared-use path on one side of the roadway and a 5-foot sidewalk on the other to accommodate bicycles and pedestrians.

Waukegan Airport

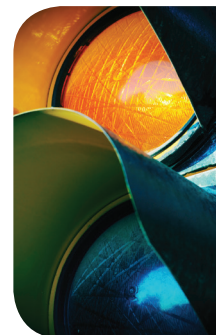
During the past year, coordination efforts have increased with the Waukegan Airport on their proposed runway/taxiway extension planning efforts. Discussions have taken place among numerous agencies to determine how the two projects will work together. These discussions are ongoing and proposed plans to accommodate both studies are being determined.



33rd Street Traffic Signal

Stakeholders have expressed concerns about safety at the intersection of IL 131 and Wakefield Drive/33rd Street and suggested installation of a traffic signal.

Traffic signal installations must meet warrants that are based on parameters such as traffic volumes, roadway classification, and spacing with respect to other signalized intersections. The Department performed a traffic signal warrant analysis and found that a signal is not warranted at 33rd Street.



Next Steps

The IL 131 study is in the preliminary engineering and environmental analysis stage of the project, known as Phase I. All federally-funded projects, such as the IL 131 study, must evaluate a range of alternatives in Phase I to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). One of the alternatives must be the "No Build" alternative, which would not propose any changes. The potential impacts to the environment due to each alternative are assessed during Phase I. The phase concludes with identification of the Preferred Alternative. The next stage of the project is Phase II. Final design plans are produced and the right-of-way necessary for construction is acquired during Phase II. Finally, Phase III is the construction of the project's Preferred Alternative.

This improvement is not currently included in the Department's FY 2015-2020 Proposed Multi-Modal Transportation Improvement Program. However, this project will be included in our priorities for future funding considerations among similar improvement needs throughout the region.

